

Section 5.8

Beginning to use 'what' and 'where'



Why is this important?

Children need to ask questions to become active learners (i.e. to take part in their own learning). It is a critical tool in facilitating problem-solving too.

What to do

- What?
 - ★ Share a book and take it in turns to point to something and ask 'What is it?'
 - ★ At snack-time (either with other children or pretend with toys) ask the child/toys 'What shall we have to drink?'
 - ★ Put puzzle pieces/toys/pictures into a bag. Take it in turns to take one out and say 'What have I got?'
- Where?
 - ★ Again, share a book, taking it in turns to ask 'Where's the ...?' and then find it on the page.
 - ★ Sort the clean washing together: put it into piles of socks, pants, trousers, etc. or Mummy's, Daddy's, boy's, etc. Take it in turns to choose something from the basket and say 'Where (do the) pants go?'
 - ★ Use a variety of toys such as a doll's house and furniture, farmyard and animals, playground and children, etc. Take it in turns to choose an item (e.g. bed) and ask 'Where (does the) bed go?'



Step up

- Introduce other question words (e.g. 'who') and vary your questions and comments (e.g. 'Whose hat is this?', 'Where shall we put it?', 'What did we do?').
- Focus on the different meaning of each.

Step down

- Use gestures or signs for the question words.
- Don't worry too much about the grammar, stress the key words (e.g. 'Where (do the) pants go?')
- Use question words during everyday routines. Take it in turns so you are not expecting the child to answer all the time.
- Sometimes, when you ask a question, answer it yourself!

